These few criticisms cannot detract from the immense value of this volume which the reviewer has added to his recommended list of text books for undergraduates at Queen's in the hope that in turn, they will help him to educate his clinical colleagues ! !

RG

FUNDAMENTALS OF NEUROLOGY. By John M Sutherland. (Pp 272. £7.95). Lancaster: MTP Press, 1981.

DR. Sutherland is a distinguished and experienced clinical neurologist. His book is designed as an elementary text with a strong clinical bias. He has succeeded and written a very useful book for medical students and postgraduates sitting examinations. There are numerous lists and tables which they will find very useful and at the end of most chapters there are diagnostic tips of a very practical nature. Perhaps in the next edition he would give greater mention to conditions affecting the spinal cord, such as dissecting aneurysm of the aorta and epidural abscess.

This book is strongly recommended and makes good reading for all practitioners, especially those who have an interest in neurology.

JHDM

ESSENTIAL OBSTETRIC PRACTICE. By Gerald J Amiel. (Pp x + 260, Figs 58. £3.75). Lancaster: MTP Press, 1981.

GERALD Aimel, a senior consultant of many years experience, has written a new book in a traditional and highly personalised style. It is well illustrated with line drawings aimed particularly at midwives in training and would be suitable also for medical students. It is readable, sound and informative, though only briefly touches on the more recent advances in the subject. Scant attention is given to the role of ultrasound and recent concepts about the onset of labour are not developed. Rather the book has a practical approach dealing adequately in an up to date fashion with aspects of the subject encountered by the student in everyday practice.

JWKR

ENZYMOPATHIES. (Volume 10, part 1 of Clinics in Haematology). Edited by William C Mentzer. (Pp vii + 256, Illustrated. £9.75). London, Philadelphia, Toronto: WB Saunders, 1981.

A MINORITY of healthy individuals given the antimalarial drug primaquine will develop acute haemolytic anaemia. The demonstration, some 20 years ago, that this was a consequence of their having low levels of glucose-6-dehydrogenase in their red cells. was the starting point for very intensive studies of red cell metabolism in health and disease and this publication summarises the present state of knowledge in this field.

The first chapters are concerned with the investigation of a patient suspected of suffering from such a disorder and deal in considerable detail with the abnormalities in enzyme systems associated with red cell carbohydrate metabolism.

In the section on methaemoglobin, the contribution made by QH Gibson whilst working in the Queen's University Department of Biochemistry with Professor Harrison is acknowledged. Gibson was the first to define the normal pathway of methaemoglobin reduction, the pathway utilised when methylene blue is added and correctly identified the site of the enzymatic defect in hereditary methaemoglobinaemia.

The following chapters deal with the acquired abnormalities of red cell metabolism and then the role of enzyme studies in genetic and forensic studies is discussed.

The section of most general interest is "The Red Blood Cell as a Biopsy Tool". Many diseases seemingly unrelated to anaemia and red cell production can be so diagnosed. Inborn errors of metabolism such as the Lesch-Nyhan Syndrome, orotic aciduria, galactosaemia, triose phosphate isomerase and phosphofructokinase deficiency, can all be diagnosed by study of the patient's red cells, as can a variety of obscure immunological defects and miscellaneous inborn errors such as acatalasaemia and glutathiane synthesase deficiency. Various vitamin and trace element deficiencies can also be identified by analysis of red cells.

Recent developments in this field include the useful suggestions that the level of haemoglobin A1c may be an index for diabetic control and that specific abnormalities of red cell cation transport are found in patients with essential hypertension but not seen in individuals with hypertension secondary to other pathologies.

This present edition of Clinics in Haematology maintains the high standard of these publications as authoritative works of reference and will be very useful to all interested in this rapidly expanding area of laboratory investigations.

JMB

OPHTHALMIC ELECTRODIAGNOSIS. By NR Galloway, MD, FRCS. Second Edition. (Pp X + 180, Illustrated. £14.00). London: Lloyd-Luke Medical Books, 1981.

THIS book is intended to be a basic guide for those working in the field of ocular electrodiagnosis. It is divided into two sections, the first dealing with the theory and method of electrodiagnostic techniques as applied to the eye, and the second encompassing the clinical applications of ocular electrophysiology.

The initial chapters provide sound guidelines for obtaining electroretinographic, electrooculographic and visually evoked responses under different stimulus conditions and states of ocular adaptation. The origin, nature and physiological variations of the various responses are analysed in some detail and problems of artefacts and quantification carefully discussed. Less commonly used ocular electrodiagnostic tests such as electronystagmography and electromyography are also discussed but in much less detail. Practical advice is provided for those about to establish an ophthalmic electrodiagnostic laboratory, including an evaluation and costing of currently available equipment. The application of electrodiagnostic techniques to the diagnosis and elucidation of inherited and acquired degenerative disease of the retina is discussed in detail in the second section. The effects of medial opacities on the various electrophysiological responses are described and a small section devoted to electrodiagnostic tests in toxic and deficiency states and ocular injuries.

The chapters are well written and accompanied by an up to date bibliography. This book will have particular appeal to ophthalmologists, physicians and scientists specializing in the field of ocular electrodiagnosis. It will also provide an informative text for those wishing to know how electrophysiology relates to disorders of the eye.

DBA

TOPICS IN RENAL DISEASE. Lancaster: MTP Press.

THERE are five books in this series each dealing with a single topic or related group of topics. They seem a little expensive for their size at £5.95 each but they have hard covers and are pleasantly produced on good quality paper. Taken together they cover renal disease in sufficient detail for anyone except the specialist nephrologist. They certainly would be adequate for preparation for the membership examination and would be very helpful for a registrar coming to work in a renal unit. They are, however, somewhat uneven in quality.